

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9716

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL OPORTO UNN

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA UNN

UNCLAS LISBON 2180

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PO

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER PALMA CARLOS ON ELECTIONS

REF: LISBON 1990

1. IN LONDON INTERVIEW MAY 28 WITH UP CORRESPONDENT, PRIME MINISTER PALMA CARLOS MADE NUMBER STATEMENTS WHICH CLARIFY FUTURE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN PORTUGAL. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WHETHER OR NOT NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS WILL BE TRULY FREE, PM SAID HE COULD GUARANTEE THEY WOULD BE. WHEN ASKED IF A SALAZARIST PARTY COULD PARTICIPATE, HE RESPONDED THAT "WE WILL PERMIT ALL TO PARTICIPATE FREELY. WE WANT THE ELECTIONS TO REFLECT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE."

2. PM ALSO REMARKED AT ANOTHER POINT THAT COMMITTEE TO DRAFT NEW ELECTORAL LAW (REFTEL PARA 2) HAS BEEN NAMED. COMMITTEE WILL BE CHAIRED BY RESPECTED SOCIALIST LAWYER JOSE DE MAGALHAES GODINHO, NOW APNING EDITOR OF NEWSPAPER REPUBLICA. OTHER SIX MEMBERS, ALL LAWYERS, INCLUDE CENTRIST ANGELO ALMEIDA RIBEIRO, PRESIDENT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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BAR ASSOCIATION; MANUEL JOAO PALMA CARLOS, BROTHER OF

PRIME MINISTER AND ATTORNEY FOR CUBA CAPTAIN PERALTA;
AND JOSE MANUEL GALVAO TELLES, FORMER LEGAL AIDE TO
MARCELLO CAETANO.

3. PM SAID NEW ELECTORAL LAW WILL GOVERN BOTH ELECTIONS
FOR DELEGATES TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL DRAFT
NEW CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS FOR NEW PRESIDENT. PALMA
CARLOS SAID LATTER ELECTION WILL OCCUR IN EARLY SPRING
OF 1975 SOON AFTER CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTED. NEW
PRESIDENT, ONCE ELECTED, WILL IMMEDIATELY CHOOSE A NEW
PRIME MINISTER.

4. CORRESPONDENT ASKED WHETHER NEW GOVERNMENT TO BE
ELECTED NEXT YEAR WILL BE INDEPENDENT FROM NATIONAL
SALVATION JUNTA, AND WHETHER JUNTA WOULD BE DISSOLVED.
PALMA CARLOS RESPONDED AFTER SHORT PAUSE THAT HE COULD
NOT GUARANTEE ANYTHING IN THIS REGARD, NOTING THAT
QUESTION HAS NOT YET BEEN DISCUSSED. HE STATED HIS
PERSONAL CONVICTION THAT COUNTRY WILL RETURN TO
"CONSTITUTIONAL NORMALITY" AFTER ELECTIONS REGARDLESS
OF TENDENCIES OF NEW GOVERNMENT.

COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST SPECIFIC INDICATION FROM HIGH
LEVEL THAT RIGHT-WING PARTIES (WERE THEY TO APPEAR)
WOULD BE ALLOWED TO RUN CANDIDATES IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS.
LOCAL PRESS HAS NOT YET COMMENTED ON PM'S REMARKS, BUT
OPPOSITION TO PARTICIPATION OF "SALAZARISTS" IN DEMOCRATIC
PROCESS SURE TO ARISE FROM LEFT. WILLINGNESS ALLOW RIGHT
TO PLAY BALL IS ENCOURAGING SIGN THAT NEW GOVERNMENT
DETERMINED SEE THAT TRUE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES FOLLOWED. SCOTT

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